

Preventing Fatigue Due to Lupus

Fatigue is a very common complaint of all people with systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE), even when no other symptoms of active disease are present. The fatigue of lupus isn't just being tired. You may feel an extreme fatigue that interferes with many aspects of your daily life. You may find that you are unable to participate in your normal pattern of daily activities, such as working, caring for your family and home, or participating in social activities. The exact cause of this fatigue is not known.

Your doctor and nurse will probably ask you about your lifestyle and patterns of daily living and activity. They will also evaluate your overall fitness, health, nutrition, and ability to handle stress. Your doctor or nurse will then be able to advise you about how your fatigue can be reduced. It is important to remember that getting enough rest, maintaining physical fitness, and keeping stress under control are absolutely necessary for anyone with lupus.

Changes in your lifestyle and patterns of daily living and activity may not be easy to accept. In addition, the changes necessary for you to cope with your disease today may be different from the changes you may have to make later as your disease changes. A positive attitude and a well-thought-out, but flexible, plan of action will increase the chances that you can make these changes successfully.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

CARING FOR YOURSELF

- ▲ Get enough sleep. You may be able to get by on 8 hours a night, or you may need more.
- ▲ Plan for additional rest periods throughout the day, as needed. Do not exhaust yourself.
- ▲ Getting enough rest does not mean no activity at all. A well-designed exercise program is important to maintaining strength, endurance, and overall fitness.
- ▲ Every week, make a simple plan of your work and activities. The plan can help you organize the events of your life and ensure that you have a good balance of rest and activity.
- ▲ Each day, review your plan and decide if you are physically up to the activities for that day. Be flexible; if you don't have the strength to do an activity today, do it another time.
- ▲ Don't try to complete a large task or project all at one time; divide it into several steps.
- ▲ Eat a well-balanced diet.
- ▲ Dealing with stressful issues and problems takes a lot of energy. If you feel stressed out, talk with your doctor or nurse. They may be able to provide you with help for your problem or direct you to someone else who can.